

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH May 10, 2011

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

MINUTES

The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a meeting on this date at 6:00 p.m. in the Wawaloam School cafeteria. Members present were Gregory Coutcher, Chairperson; Teri Maia-Cicero, Vice Chairperson; Valerie Zuercher, Clerk; Mark Rafanelli; Theresa Donovan; Paul McFadden; and Claudine Pande. Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar; Director of Administration Robert V. Ross; Director of Special Services Carmella Farrar; Student Member Matthew French, (left the meeting at 7:06 p.m.); Attorney Vincent Ragosta, (arrived at 6:15 p.m.) were present.

ORDER – Chair Coutcher called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all, Wawaloam School student Cadia Greene sang the National Anthem, and Member McFadden read the District Mission Statement.

Open Forum – None

Presentation – Student Member Report – Student Member Matthew French reported that today the high school held a Blood Drive that was fairly successful and the junior/senior prom is approaching.

Wawaloam/Lineham Schools Presentation – Principal Melissa Marino welcomed everyone to Wawaloam School and thanked parents and students for coming out this evening. She recognized and thanked faculty members in attendance for their involvement in tonight’s presentation. First Principal Marino introduced Mrs. Scheff and her choral students presenting Do-Re-Mi. Next Mrs. Corcoran and Mrs. Geyer’s first-grade students shared their science journal entries.

Attorney Vincent Ragosta arrived at this time, (6:15 p.m.).

Mrs. Levett’s second-grade students interacted with School Committee members to share their science journal entries and present “Weird Science” and Mrs. Millard’s second-grade students read their writings about what they learned at Wawaloam School. Mrs. Petrarca and Mrs. Civic gave an overview of the Kindergarten PALS scores and shared examples of kindergarten students’ before and after writing skills. Concluding the presentation was Behavior Specialist Morgan Garcia who gave a brief overview on the PBIS, (Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports) work in the elementary schools.

Vice Chair Cicero made a motion to move up under New Business, A. Approve Youth to Youth Field Trip; seconded by Clerk Zuercher; and voted 7 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS – Approve Youth to Youth Field Trip – Member McFadden made a motion to approve the Youth to Youth field trip; seconded by Clerk Zuercher; and voted 7 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA- Superintendent Geismar gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.

Clerk Zuercher made a motion to accept the consent agenda; seconded by Vice Chair Cicero; and voted 7 – 0 in favor.

The following items were approved:

A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Minutes of April 26, 2011; Executive Session Minutes of April 26, 2011

B. Personnel Items

1. Appointments

2. Leaves of Absence

3. Resignations

4. Grievances

5. Non-Renewals

6. Recalls – (As Recommended by the Superintendent)

a. Please see attached (C-94) Recall List

7. Sabbaticals

C. Bills – In the amount of \$194,412.25

D. Home School Approvals

1. CURRY – Trenton, Clarke

End Consent Agenda

Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding Correspondence.

Correspondence – (1) April 27, 2011 RESOLUTION (Binding Arbitration) of the North Smithfield School Committee; (2) April 26, 2011 RESOLUTION (Binding Arbitration) of the Coventry School Committee; (3) April 29, 2011 RESOLUTIONS (Binding Arbitration) (Contract Continuation) of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee

Monthly Budget Projection 2010 – 2011 – Director of Administration Robert Ross reported that the 2010 – 2011 Budget Projection continues to be in very good financial condition.

Monthly Status Reports – Superintendent – Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding the Monthly Status Reports.

Business

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Special Education – (No Report Submitted)

Maintenance

Technology

NEW BUSINESS – Student Information System (SIS) Implementation Update – Superintendent Geismar reported that the implementation for ASPEN is going well. The District is in the middle of the second validation process and there will be more to follow. Staff is working hard and doing a good job.

Approve Academic Interventionist – Elementary Job Description – Dr. Geismar gave his recommendation to approve the Academic Interventionist – Elementary job description. Principal Marino and Dr. Geismar proposed that one .5FTE Reading Recovery position be replaced with a .5FTE Academic Interventionist position. The Academic Interventionist will provide support to students in both reading and math. Dr. Geismar noted one correction that needs to be made if the School Committee approves this job description. Reading Recovery Trained will be moved and listed under the heading Certification Requirements.

Student Member Matthew French left the meeting at this time, (7:06 p.m.).

Member McFadden asked clarifying questions and listed various

reasons that he would prefer that Position Requirements be changed to read, Master's Degree and to eliminate "or its equivalent preferred". Dr. Geismar stated that under the job description he is recommending, an individual will be required to be Reading Certified or Reading Recovery trained. This is the recommendation he is presenting to the School Committee for approval.

Member Rafanelli moved to approve this job description [Academic Interventionist – Elementary] as stated; seconded by Clerk Zuercher; and voted 6 – 1 in favor. Member McFadden voted no. The motion passed.

Approve Early Childhood Coordinator Job Description – Dr. Geismar stated that he and Director of Special Education Mrs. Farrar are bringing this job description forward for approval. Currently the District employs a .5 FTE Early Childhood Coordinator and the desire is to expand to a 1.0FTE coordinator for next year. The position would be funded out of IDEA federal grant funds. Mrs. Farrar asked the School Committee to keep in mind that early childhood intervention is important and has become more regulated, complicated, and broad. The expansion of Lineham School next year as the Early Childhood Center and the desire to add another preschool classroom will require the District to work with parents. The District is expanding in many ways, responsibilities have broadened, and there is a need to have someone to coordinate that. The Child Outreach Coordinator would be part of that. In response to

Clerk Zuercher's inquiry, Mrs. Farrar stated that between the two communities, there are approximately 300

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children ages 3 to 5 and there are a lot more that the District has not reached yet. In response to Member McFadden's inquiry, Dr. Geismar reiterated that funding for this position would come from a federal grant. The position would be part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement and if grant funding were unavailable, the individual in that position would be laid off. A discussion ensued regarding expanding the preschool program and increasing the tuition for next school year as a means to generate revenue for the district. Mrs. Farrar agreed it is a good idea to analyze and look at the potential to expand the preschool program.

Member Pande moved to approve the Early Childhood Coordinator job description; seconded by Member Donovan; and voted 7 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Approve Reading Specialist Job Description – Dr. Geismar informed members that this job description is for a Reading Supervisor. There was a discrepancy with the job description that was enclosed in members' packets and the correct copy was emailed to members after the packets were distributed.

Chair Coutcher deferred discussing this agenda item momentarily while copies of the correct job description were made for member.

2011 – 2012 Budget – Dr. Geismar reported that after meeting with auditor Pat Boucher to discuss the new GASB-54 accounting regulations, she is recommending assigning the District surplus funds to fill in the line items that the District anticipates will have overruns for next year. Dr. Geismar said that this item would be added to the next meeting agenda for School Committee approval.

Director of Administration Robert Ross informed members of a new regulation, GASB-54. The regulation explains what different government authorities need to do with surplus money or fund balances for the subsequent year. Assigning surplus funds will be a cue to remind the School Committee and to inform the people it serves that the committee is assigning these funds. However, the District is not obligated to spend the assigned monies if no shortfalls transpire. Mr. Ross stated that there is no action to take tonight. He noted that the key to this regulation is the action is for the subsequent year. Therefore, the School Committee would want to take action before July 1, 2011. Mr. Ross stated that he would bring information to the committee at the next Business Meeting concerning GASB-54.

Dr. Geismar told the School Committee of an emergency that transpired subsequent to tonight's agenda going out that needs to be

addressed immediately. Due to health concerns, the carpeting in two Wawaloam classrooms needs to be removed and tile floors installed. Replacement costs will be approximately \$5,800. Dr. Geismar requested a consensus to go ahead with the project immediately and to have the item on the next regular meeting agenda for proper School Committee approval. The committee agreed

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and Member Pande requested to also include the cost of purchasing floor rugs for students to sit on. Dr. Geismar stated that administration would move forward tomorrow morning to rectify the conditions in Mrs. Millard and Ms. Callanan's classrooms.

Chair Coutcher reverted to the item that was momentarily deferred.

Approve Reading Specialist Job Description – Dr. Geismar stated that the Reading Supervisor is a .5 FTE administrative position. The Reading Supervisor will assist teachers and principals to implement the new reading program at Wawaloam and Metcalf Schools. The position is budgeted for \$65,000 and would be embedded in the budget going forward. The School Committee needs to approve this job description before the position can be filled. Dr. Geismar said he anticipates that the position will be needed for approximately three to five years in order to achieve consistency with implementing the new reading program. Member McFadden stated that he thought he had

heard this position would be needed for two-years. Principal Marino agreed with Dr. Geismar that the District would need at least three years to implement the new reading program. Chair Coutcher proposed that since this position is an administrative position it could be contracted for three-years as is customary for other administrative positions. Vice Chair Cicero agreed that a three-year renewal is a good idea. Member McFadden asked what would happen next year if potential cuts need to be made. The School Committee cannot predict unexpected costs that may arise and he does not want the District to have to buyout of contracts. Chair Coutcher pointed out that the Superintendent is asking the committee to approve the job description for next year. Member McFadden's concerns can be addressed when it is time to hire someone for the position.

Member Donovan moved to approve the Reading Supervisor job description as presented; seconded by Vice Chair Cicero; and voted 7 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

Grant Writer Status Update – Dr. Geismar reported that former grant writer consultant Alicia Condon just submitted a grant application on behalf of the district to the Rhode Island Foundation. If the District is awarded this grant, it will receive help with the PBIS program to expand it to all EWG schools over the next three years. The grant writer budget for next school year is approximately \$3,500. A Grant Writer Consultant job posting is advertised and thus far, ten applicants have applied. Dr. Geismar stated that he will continue to

update the School Committee and he is hopeful that he will bring a candidate forward in the near future.

Approve Rescinding Withdrawal from SORICO – Dr. Geismar stated his recommendation to rescind the District’s letter of withdrawal from SORICO. He took Member Donovan’s concerns to Attorney Andrew Henneous. Mr. Henneous’ written response stating his support for rescinding the withdrawal from SORICO is enclosed in members’ packets. Member McFadden disagreed with the superintendent’s recommendation and voiced various concerns he has about rejoining an organization that

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is being disbanded. Member Pande pointed out that it has been determined that distribution of any potential assets from SORICO can be distributed to member districts. Additionally, the district is still obligated for any liabilities incurred whether or not it remains a member of SORICO. In response to Member Donovan’s inquiry, Dr. Geismar said he could explore if there is an opportunity for EWG and North Kingstown Schools to divide legal fees since Attorney Henneous is representing both districts concerning the same matter.

Member Rafanelli moved to rescind our letter resigning from SORICO; seconded by Clerk Zuercher; and voted 6 – 1 in favor. Member

McFadden voted no. The motion passed.

Capital Project Update – None

Reports/Comments – None

**Important Dates and Meetings – Friday, May 20, 2011 – Jr/Sr Prom;
Tuesday,**

**May 24, 2011 – School Committee Meeting-(Special Education
Presentation); Wednesday, May 25, 2011 – Capital Project Building
Committee Meeting; Thursday, June 2, 2011 – Honors Night @ 6:30
PM; Saturday, June 11, 2011 – Graduation (Ryan Ctr. @ 4:PM);
Wednesday, June 15, 2011 – School Committee Meeting-(Jr. High
Presentation); Wednesday, June 22, 2011 – Jr. High Moving Up
Ceremony @ 6PM; Tuesday, June 28, 2011 – School Committee
Meeting-(Facilities Presentation)**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 – Vice Chair
Cicero moved to go into Executive Session at 8:08 p.m. in accordance
with 42-46-5 (2) – CBA – (C-94/Teachers' Association)-Negotiation
Discussion and/or Pending Litigation and 42-46-5 (a) (4) – Discussion
of Investigative Proceedings Regarding Allegations of Employee
Misconduct; seconded by Member Pande; and voted as follows:**

Gregory Coutcher Yes

Teri Cicero Yes

Valerie Zuercher Yes

Mark Rafanelli Yes

Theresa Donovan Yes

Paul McFadden Yes

Claudine Pande Yes

Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 8:08 p.m.

Member Rafanelli moved to reconvene to Open Session; seconded by Member Donovan; and voted 7 - 0 in favor.

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(Clerk Zuercher left the meeting [during Executive Session] at 8:48 p.m.).

Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 8:56 p.m.

No votes were taken during Executive Session.

Adjournment – Member Rafanelli moved to adjourn at 8:56 p.m. Member Donovan seconded the motion. Voted 6 – 0 in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

ROBIN CERIO

CLERK